

Region 3 GPRA Baseline RCRA Corrective Action Facility

US Steel - Fairless Works

**USX Industrial Park
South Pennsylvania Avenue
Fairless Hills, PA 19030
Congressional District 8
EPA ID #: PAD002375376
Last Updated 12/30/2003**

Current Progress at the Site

In 1993, EPA and US Steel entered into a Consent Order for clean-up of the Fairless Works site. The Consent Order incorporated the entire 2500-acre facility. The 68 areas identified for further investigation include former production and disposal areas. During construction of Fairless Works, numerous borrow pits were excavated to provide fill material to raise the main facility site above the elevation of the 100-year floodplain. Slag and other materials were deposited in these borrow pits over many years.

In 1998, the facility expressed interest in obtaining a release from liability which is available for remediation performed under the Pennsylvania Act 2 Land Recycling Program. The release from liability will aide in redevelopment of the property. The redevelopment plan is designed to revitalize the Levittown area, which experienced the loss of over 5000 jobs in the 1980s and 1990s. US Steel has converted over 450 acres of the uncontaminated areas to parcels for lease and sale. The 24 companies which have relocated to the site have brought in 1,800 new jobs. The US Steel property is within a "Keystone Opportunity Zone," with tax incentives for industry located or re-locating there. They are marketing the parcels to heavy industry, as their location near interstate highways and the on-site deep water port on the Delaware River is conducive to industrial operations.

In order to expedite the clean-up and redevelopment of the site, EPA, PADEP and US Steel have formed a team to proceed with the environmental investigations. The team is first focusing its efforts on parcels of the property which have been identified for lease or sale. Currently this involves a 45-acre parcel leased to Dominion, which plans to build a clean-burning power generating station. A soils investigation has been completed and EPA and PADEP agree that the soils do not pose a risk to human health or the environment under the currently intended industrial activities. PADEP issued an Act 2 release of liability for the soils at the Dominion parcel in September, 2002. Dominion has begun construction at the site.

In the summer of 2001, US Steel discovered two previously unknown sumps filled with non-hazardous

waste from the ingot mold preparation area, an area now leased to Reed Mineral. The material is almost exclusively grease and oil. The sumps have 18 inch thick concrete walls lined with steel. The associated pipes and trenches were primarily empty.

During the summer of 2001, Reed Mineral drove heavy equipment across the soils above the sumps. The heavy equipment compacted the soils and allowed the waste material to seep up to the surface, where it was observed. US Steel excavated the area and removed the impacted soils. EPA determined that as the material is non-hazardous and is contained in sturdy sumps, US Steel can leave the material in place and cap the material in the sumps with concrete. The entire area will be backfilled and no digging will be allowed at the area. Reed Minerals intends the area as a parking lot, which will not disturb the material left in place. EPA and US Steel are developing a groundwater monitoring plan to determine if the groundwater in the area has been impacted by the former activities at the ingot mold area.

Site Description

Located on the west bank of the Delaware River, approximately 20 miles northeast of Philadelphia, PA, US Steel's Fairless Works has been in operation since 1952. Fairless Works consists of approximately 2500 acres, on which were a coke production plant, steel making operations, finishing and forging operations, a power house, and a chemical plant. The site is still home to a U.S. Steel finishing facility - the sheet and tin mill, but the rest of the operations closed down between 1982 and 1991. As part of the redevelopment of the site for future industrial use, demolition of the inactive facilities occurred between 1993 and 1995.

Site Responsibility

RCRA Corrective Action activities at the US Steel - Fairless Works facility are being conducted as a joint lead by EPA and PADEP's Land Recycling Program (Act 2). The investigation and any necessary clean-up activities are being implemented in accordance with a federal Corrective Action Order and the Act 2 Program.

Contaminants

The main contaminants in the groundwater are PAHs (poly aromatic hydrocarbons), and TCE. The primary contaminants in the soil are naphthalene and heavy metals, such as arsenic and lead.

Community Interaction

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service expressed concerns to EPA and US Steel on the potential exposure of wildfowl to oil on the surface of the wastewater treatment plant lagoons. To discourage wildfowl from entering the area, propane cannons were installed and continue to operate. In addition, netting over the lagoons and draining of some the water from the lagoons has proved successful in keeping the wildlife away from the area. These measures were included as requirements in the Order as Interim Measures until final remediation is accomplished. Quarterly reports on the success of the Interim Measures is sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as well as EPA.

US Steel has published the appropriate NIR (Notice of Intent to Remediate) and gave the public 30 days to submit comments on the plan to lease the parcel to Dominion. No comments were received. The site has applied for and received a non-use aquifer designation from the Act 2 Program in 1999. This was also published with an opportunity for public comment.

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For more information about EPA's corrective action webpage, including Environmental Indicators, please visit our site at: www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm

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